

POSITION PAPER
UNITED STATES DELEGATION

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MAY 12, 1962

UNITED NATIONS OUTER SPACE COMMITTEE
TECHNICAL SUBCOMMITTEE MEETING
MAY 28, 1962
GENEVA

PROBLEM

The Technical Subcommittee of the United Nations Committee on the Peaceful Uses of Outer Space will convene in Geneva on May 28. For that meeting a United States position is required which will build on and develop ideas put forward in the discussions conducted in the Outer Space Committee in March.

UNITED STATES POSITION

Organizational and Administrative Matters

1. Officers of Subcommittee: The Subcommittee is to elect its own officers. General agreement is that Dr. David Forbes Martyn of Australia will be elected as Chairman. It is considered unnecessary to elect additional officers and undesirable to do so since this might raise troika and related problems. Dr. Martyn can deputize individual members as necessary. The Secretary to the Subcommittee, probably Mr. Abdel Ghani, will be provided by the United Nations Secretariat.

2. Records and Reports:

2.1 It is planned that records produced by the Secretariat will be summary rather than verbatim and that provisional records will be submitted to delegates for correction. In view of the technical nature of the discussions and importance of many of the questions which may be raised, the Delegation should exercise particular care to ensure the accuracy of these records.

2.2 It would be best for the final report of the Subcommittee to be prepared by appropriate ad hoc groups appointed by the Chairman on a subject matter basis and with administrative assistance of Secretariat. The Delegation should sound out the Chairman on this score and suggest that such a drafting group should be small and should be selected strictly on basis of individual qualifications, if possible. Otherwise, political and geographical considerations might lead to an unwieldy group of mixed competence. If the latter approach is unavoidable, the Delegation should report its recommendations regarding composition to the Department.

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3. Voting Procedure

3.1 The conduct of business is subject to the US-USSR accord that business shall be conducted to the extent possible without the taking of votes. However, it is probable that the Soviets or a bloc delegate may seek to create the impression that the normal voting procedures have been abandoned and that it has been agreed to proceed exclusively on the basis of unanimity. In such case, the United States Delegation should refer to the agreed statement made by Committee Chairman Matsch on March 19, 1962 that ". . . through informal consultations it has been agreed among the members of the Committee that it will be the aim of all members of the Committee and its Subcommittees to conduct the Committees' work in such a way that the Committee will be able to reach agreement in its work without need for voting. . . ." The Delegation should reaffirm that it is indeed the hope and aim of the United States that the Subcommittee will be able to operate on this basis, but it should be made clear that the normal majority voting procedures indicated by General Assembly Procedural Rule 162 have not been waived or renounced and would apply if necessary to the conduct of the Subcommittee's work.

3.2 The Delegation should attempt to ensure that if a vote becomes necessary on a given issue, it is the Soviets who must seek to bring about the vote rather than the United States.

4. Secretariat:

4.1 The Committee on the Peaceful Uses of Outer Space is, by Resolution 1721, supposed to make full use of the functions and resources of the Secretariat in maintaining contact with other organizations, providing for nonduplicating exchanges, and studying the promotion of cooperation. The Secretary-General is also to "maintain" the public registry of launch information, although states report to the Committee through the Secretary-General.

4.2 The United States and the Soviet Union have thus far held different interpretations of the role of the Secretariat in support of the Outer Space Committee. The United States desires to build up the executive capacity of the Secretariat and believes this will in any event be necessary for the execution of the responsibilities assigned the Committee on a continuing basis.

4.3 The Soviet Union has taken the position that the Secretariat should be used as a purely technical (administrative) agency serving the Committee and its Subcommittees and that its

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technical functions should have no operative character. Thus, the space registration should be carried out by the Committee itself.

4.4 The United States holds that the Space Committee itself is not in a position to maintain close contact with space-associated organizations on a continuing basis or serve as a clearing house for nonduplicating information relating to international cooperation in the peaceful uses of outer space. The United States Delegation should, accordingly, ask that the Secretary-General be requested to report on the (mechanics, not policies of) steps he has taken on behalf of the Outer Space Committee to establish contact with and set up a comprehensive directory of pertinent organizations, together with relevant information on their purposes, officers, facilities, activities, inter-relationships, et cetera. The Secretary-General should keep this material under review. In addition, the Delegation should propose that the Secretary-General maintain a current inventory of international space activities and cooperative arrangements for the use of the Committee and of interested members of the United Nations and specialized agencies. With regard to registry in this connection, the United States Delegation should simply hold to the language of the Resolution which directs the Secretary-General to maintain the registry.

4.5 It is planned that the United States and the Soviet Union will each provide an adviser to the United Nations Secretariat to assist it in serving the Outer Space Committee. The Delegation should be in close contact with the United States adviser when selected.

5. Observers:

5.1 The Delegation should take the position that observer status should be restricted to those bodies mentioned in General Assembly Resolution 1721 (XVI)--ITU, WMO, UNESCO, ECOSOC, and COSPAR--and other specialized agencies and United Nations organs with direct interest in outer space matters. We strongly oppose confusing the deliberations of the Outer Space Committee and its Subcommittees by granting special status to professional and other types of organizations or societies of varying degrees of public responsibility.

5.2 If it becomes desirable to consult on specific matters with an organization not included under the above criteria, the Committee or a Subcommittee could ask the Secretary-General to establish and/or maintain contact with such organization and/or invite the organization to submit an oral or written report. Beyond this, the Department considers

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direct participation of such organizations in work of the Committee or Subcommittees unacceptable. *

5.3 The suggestion has been made that selection of observers might be left to a special subcommittee, but this would have the effect of derogating from the role we think the Secretary-General should properly play and would arouse the expectation that other organizations will be granted observer status. This approach is therefore unacceptable.

5.4 If strong pressure persists for some kind of observer status for such organizations, the status should be strictly limited to that of non-governmental organizations on the Secretary-General's register in ECOSOC. Such observer status would not accord organizations the right to occupy designated seats during meetings, to participate in meetings, or to circulate documentation unless invited. Organizations would be entitled to observe open meetings of the Committee and Subcommittees and receive unrestricted documentation.

5.5 The United States Delegation should develop support for the United States position on observer status and should ensure that no formal presentation is made of an IAF offer of a trip for six members of the Committee to attend an IAF meeting in Sofia next fall, or any similar gambits.

Objectives and Program

6. Role of United Nations:

6.1 The prior meeting of the full Committee on the Peaceful Uses of Outer Space during March clearly established a consensus that the function of the Committee

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* A special problem is represented by the International Astronautical Federation, which has been agitating for observer status. The Soviet bloc delegations, plus India and Italy have expressed themselves in favor of observer status for the IAF. If this matter comes up for discussion, the United States Delegation should point out that COSPAR may be distinguished from IAF in that it is established upon a foundation of direct representation of National Academies/National Research Councils of the member nations and appropriate member unions of the International Council of Scientific Unions. The IAF, on the other hand, is an agglomeration of purely private rocket societies whose membership is open to enthusiasts and commercial interests as well as experts.

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in the technical field is encouragement, facilitation, co-ordination, and support of existing agencies and efforts to engender cooperation in outer space matters, the conduct of relevant studies and the establishment of such additional nonduplicating exchanges as may be useful.

6.2 The Technical Subcommittee would appear to have responsibility for the technical and scientific aspects of the following interests expressed in the 1961 Resolution on the Peaceful Uses of Outer Space:

- (a) Maintenance of technical contact with governmental organizations concerned with outer space matters.
- (b) The adequacy and support of measures for the exchange of technical information.
- (c) Comprehensive study of present programs for international cooperation in scientific space research in order to prepare for determination of desirable points of support.
- (d) Registration of launches (see part 9)

7. United States Objectives:

7.1 It is in the national interest to exert a role of leadership in the Technical Subcommittee in order to maintain the United States position as the leading advocate of international cooperation in the peaceful uses of outer space and to guide the work of the Subcommittee in directions which accord with United States policy.

7.2 The United States Delegation should therefore make an initial statement, proposing a constructive agenda for the Subcommittee's deliberations and presenting our general views on various items of this agenda.

8. United States Program:

8.1 In order to provide a firm informational basis for the Technical Subcommittee in its future work, the United States opening statement should present the following proposals and observations:

- (a) National and multi-national reports should be submitted to the Outer Space Committee through the Secretary-General by members of the United Nations and the Specialized Agencies regarding their space plans and activities. (Some nations might be able

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to use their COSPAR reports for this.)

- (b) Similar reports on a periodic and continuing basis, should be requested from other national and international, governmental and non-governmental organizations concerned with outer space matters.
- (c) The Secretary-General should be asked to organize and maintain these various reports in a convenient standard format for use of the Outer Space Committee, its Subcommittees and others. The Secretary-General should keep under review cooperative arrangements among such organizations as well as national members of the United Nations and should maintain a current picture of the overall extent and nature of international space activities and exchanges.
- (d) The Secretary-General should maintain a comprehensive directory of space-related organizations, their constitutions, purposes, officers, facilities and programs.
- (e) Informal interim reports should be requested from WMO and ITU on their work pursuant to the United Nations Resolution (prior to ECOSOC presentation). Ask these agencies to devote special consideration to the ground-support requirements which underlie satellite meteorology and communications.
- (f) In conjunction with COSPAR, the Subcommittee might survey the data storage and exchange arrangements which exist and consider what may need to be done to support useful requirements in the most simple and expeditious way, keeping in mind the practical needs and usages of the scientific community.
- (g) The Subcommittee should provide for brief technical brochures to be prepared by COSPAR or UNESCO on ground facilities and other requirements for minimal sounding rocket, tracking, and data acquisition programs.

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8.2 In addition, the Delegation should propose establishment of a study group of the Subcommittee to recommend a practical plan for the establishment, under United Nations auspices, of one or more sounding rocket ranges in equatorial regions available for scientific research by all member nations under appropriate conditions.

Contingencies and Specific Issues

9. Registration of Launchings:

9.1 The Soviet Union has urged bilateral discussions of registration procedures with the United States in order to agree on the information to be submitted for registration. They have insisted on registration of all orbital launchings in chronological order, and they have proposed that the Technical Subcommittee prescribe a unified standard registration procedure.

9.2 The United States holds the position that the types of information to be supplied for registration purposes are left to the determination of the launching state and that this is the most practical approach to the matter. Therefore, although individual members of the Subcommittee may express their opinions in the matter, the United States Delegation must not agree to a debate or negotiation of the subject which is intended to decide the form and nature of submission of registration reports.

9.3 Criticism of United States registration practices (Tab A) may be voiced by the Soviet Union on two grounds: absence of dates of re-entry; and omission of orbital elements for satellites of short flight duration. Further comment may be expected from other nations seeking information on frequencies. On the latter point, the Soviet Union is apparently also reluctant to provide frequencies but is presumably in a better position in that the Soviet Union might not hesitate to provide some frequencies, such as its standard 20 and 40 mc channels. The United States should respond as follows:

- (a) The United Nations registry has value as a "regular census of satellites which are circling our earth" (per Ad Hoc Space Committee).
- (b) The registry contributes to open and orderly conduct of space activities.

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- (c) It may be useful to states conducting launchings or tracking activities.
- (d) It could contribute ultimately to disarmament procedures.
- (e) ~~Orbital elements for satellites of very short duration cannot ordinarily be determined accurately enough for scientific use.~~
- (f) ~~Times of re-entry, especially where orbit determinations are uncertain, are very difficult to fix with precision. In any case, data for satellites no longer in orbit by the time of registration has no use to scientists.~~
- (g) Where scientific interest is involved, the United States submits very extensive data, including frequencies to COSPAR, and duplication is undesirable, as stated in Resolution 1721 (XVI).
- (h) If further argument appears necessary, the Delegation might point out that the Soviet Union has made it clear repeatedly that there are national security considerations affecting space activity. The United States must also follow the dictates of such considerations. ~~If the Soviet Union wishes to push registry further at this time, it will ~~especially~~ be necessary to discuss a verification procedure.~~

10. Contamination: The United States should point out that interference with space experiments is a highly technical issue which must be handled by experts. COSPAR, at its April-May meeting in Washington, did establish a Consultative Committee to assume concern for all such questions, utilizing special panels of experts and reporting to various institutions, including the United Nations, as appropriate. (Tab B) The Delegation should not agree to a control mechanism through the United Nations. (Contingency papers are attached on West Ford (Tab C) and the nuclear tests in the Van Allen belt. (Tab D)).

11. Boundary of Outer Space: Members of the Committee may propose definition of an altitude boundary for a lower limit to outer space and/or an upper limit to air space. The United States has consistently taken the position that satellites now in orbit are in outer space. The United States is, however, not prepared

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at this time to discuss any specific definition of the limits of outer space. The United States Delegation should therefore oppose as premature any attempt to define a boundary for outer space or air space, noting that there is no technical basis for definition of a boundary at this time. If an interest in this matter should persist, the Delegation may agree to the creation of a working group on the boundary question.

12. United Nations Space Conference:

12.1 Both the United States and the Soviet Union appear to consider that a full-scale United Nations Space Conference is not desirable at this time. Possibly to sidetrack its own earlier recommendation for such a conference, the Soviet Union has proposed that the organization of the International Outer Space Conference be entrusted to COSPAR and that the United Nations give COSPAR financial and other support to this end. This proposal was echoed by Soviet bloc delegates, and Chairman Matsch of Austria suggested that the Technical Subcommittee ". . . consider, jointly with COSPAR, the question of . . . [a] conference . . ." and draw up recommendations for it.

12.2 The Department maintains a firm position against the transfer of sponsorship of United Nations Outer Space Conference to COSPAR. General Assembly Resolution 1472 (XIV) assigned responsibility for the Conference to the United Nations Outer Space Committee and specified participation in the Conference would be by members of the United Nations and specialized agencies. The organization of the Conference by COSPAR on behalf of the Outer Space Committee and with financial assistance from the United Nations would present difficulties regarding both the scope of the Conference and the participation of unrecognized regimes.

12.3 We consider it of fundamental importance that any Conference agenda include space technology as well as science. COSPAR is essentially a scientific organization which specifically excludes technical matters from its concern. In view of East-West parity among COSPAR officers, and since COSPAR has heretofore operated on a tacit basis of unanimity, there would be less assurance that a COSPAR conference could be arranged to include space technology than would be the case with a United Nations Space Conference.

12.4 If COSPAR were to organize the Conference, it would be impossible to exclude participation of unrecognized regimes (e. g., East Germany and North Korea) which are members of the parent organization (ICSU). Because of proposed sponsorship and financial support of the Conference by the United Nations, participation by such regimes would be unacceptable.

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12.5 The above, however, does not derogate from the fact that the annual COSPAR symposia serve as a useful separate means for exposure of many members of the United Nations Committee to problems of interest to the Committee and for the exchange of scientific information. The issue might be resolved by a proposal that:

- (a) The Committee express satisfaction over the continuing symposia of COSPAR but without indicating United Nations sponsorship or support. These symposia do not satisfy all the purposes of the proposed United Nations Conference, but they diminish the urgency of organizing such a Conference.
- (b) The Subcommittee might therefore defer action on the United Nations Conference until it has time to examine the question and is better prepared to determine the direction of its interests in such a Conference.

12.6 While the Department has not wished to push the Conference idea, the interest expressed during the Outer Space Committee debates by Australia, Austria, Brazil, Canada, Hungary, India and the United Arab Republic may mean that the matter cannot be finessed. The best course might then be to state that we recognize the United Nations Space Conference might represent a worthwhile step in the United Nations program to encourage and assure exchange of scientific and technical outer space information.

12.7 If consensus is reached by the Committee that the United Nations Space Conference should be held, it should be organized by a Subcommittee of the Outer Space Committee. The assistance of COSPAR in arrangements for the scientific papers to be delivered should probably not be invited since this would precipitate a demand by the IAF to assist in the engineering aspects.

- (a) The United States Delegation should emphasize that in such arrangements maximum provision should be made for participation by scientists from countries other than the United States and the Soviet Union.

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- (b) The Delegation should emphasize the importance of timing such a conference so as to maximize its impact, to make possible full participation by qualified scientists, and to avoid disturbing conflict with other conferences such as the Conference on Science and Technology for Less Developed Areas scheduled for 1963. The Delegation might also point out that it will take about a year to prepare adequately for an international space conference. The earliest date favored by the United States would therefore be 1964.
- (c) The United States Delegation should make it clear that the conference agenda should include space technology as well as science. This is of primary importance to the significance of such a conference, and the United States Delegation should insist upon it.
- (d) The United States Delegation should propose Geneva as the conference site and should refer other suggestions to the Department for consideration.
- (e) If a conference is decided upon, the membership of the Conference Planning Subcommittee should be decided upon and the Subcommittee established. The United States favors a 6-3-3 composition ratio for that Subcommittee. The Soviet Union shares the view that the Subcommittee should be limited in membership and has favored 8 or 9 members. The United States Delegation should propose as members of the Subcommittee under a 6-3-3 arrangement: Argentina, Canada, Chad, France, Japan, Lebanon, Poland, Soviet Union, Sweden, United Kingdom, United States and another Soviet bloc state other than Hungary. The Delegation should seek the advice of the Department on any counter-proposals regarding composition of the Conference Planning Subcommittee.

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13. International Laboratory:

13.1 Proposals for international research and training institutions may be made by other members. The United States should sympathize with the needs and interests which are implied. The Delegation should note with pleasure the establishment of international centers in Europe. The combined opportunities are probably adequate for the present need. The Delegation should also point out that extensive research and training opportunities have been made available in the United States, and we hope other countries with suitable facilities will do the same. The Delegation should emphasize that facilities which are not integrally related to flight programs will not be optimal. In the interest of economical use of technical personnel, training efforts should be built around existing facilities and programs. The United States, for example, would find it difficult at this time to divert badly needed personnel from its own centers to a new one.

13.2 A proposal might be made that UNESCO establish a fellowship program to bring qualified personnel endorsed by various national space centers to existing laboratory facilities for study and training. In such case, the United States Delegation should caution against the diversion of scientific or technical personnel from existing programs for such training unless the country concerned is already mounting an appropriate space program or is planning to do so in the full realization of the substantial expense involved in such an undertaking.

14. Soviet Union Proposal to Ban Military Reconnaissance Satellites: This is not properly a matter for discussion by the Technical Subcommittee. (see Tab E)

Attachments:

- Tab A - United Nations Registration of United States Space Launches
- Tab B - Action In Response to ICSU Resolution 10/1961
- Tab C - West Ford Talking Paper (Annex G, March 14, 1962 of Position Paper, "INITIAL MEETING OF THE UNITED NATIONS COMMITTEE ON THE PEACEFUL USES OF OUTER SPACE, March 13, 1962)
- Tab D - Talking Paper on Nuclear Tests in Van Allen Belt
- Tab E - Talking Paper on USSR Proposal to Ban Military Reconnaissance Satellites